

Subpart D—Exemption Hearings Under Section 12(h) of the Se- curities Exchange Act of 1934

§ 19.120 Scope.

The rules in this subpart apply to informal hearings that may be held by the Comptroller to determine whether, pursuant to authority in sections 12 (h) and (i) of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78l (h) and (i)), to exempt in whole or in part an issuer or a class of issuers from the provisions of section 12(g), or from section 13 or 14 of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78l(g), 78m or 78n), or whether to exempt from section 16 of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78p) any officer, director, or beneficial owner of securities of an issuer. The only issuers covered by this subpart are banks whose securities are registered pursuant to section 12(g) of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78l(g)). The Comptroller may deny an application for exemption without a hearing.

§ 19.121 Application for exemption.

An issuer or an individual (officer, director or shareholder) may submit a written application for an exemption order to the Securities and Corporate Practices Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Washington, DC 20219. The application must specify the type of exemption sought and the reasons therefor, including an explanation of why an exemption would not be inconsistent with the public interest or the protection of investors. The Securities and Corporate Practices Division shall inform the applicant in writing whether a hearing will be held to consider the matter.

§ 19.122 Newspaper notice.

Upon being informed that an application will be considered at a hearing, the applicant shall publish a notice one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the community where the issuer's main office is located. The notice must state: the name and title of any individual applicants; the type of exemption sought; the fact that a hearing will be held; and a statement that interested persons may submit to the Securities and Corporate Practices Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Washington, DC 20219, within

30 days from the date of the newspaper notice, written comments concerning the application and a written request for an opportunity to be heard. The applicant shall promptly furnish a copy of the notice to the Securities and Corporate Practices Division, and to bank shareholders.

§ 19.123 Informal hearing.

(a) *Conduct of proceeding.* The adjudicative provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, formal rules of evidence and subpart A of this part do not apply to hearings conducted under this subpart, except as provided in § 19.100(b).

(b) *Notice of hearing.* Following the comment period, the Comptroller shall send a notice which fixes a date, time and place for hearing to each applicant and to any person who has requested an opportunity to be heard.

(c) *Presiding officer.* The Comptroller shall designate a presiding officer to conduct the hearing. The presiding officer shall determine all procedural questions not governed by this subpart and may limit the number of witnesses and impose time and presentation limitations as are deemed reasonable. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the presiding officer shall issue a recommended decision to the Comptroller as to whether the exemption should issue. The decision shall include a summary of the facts and arguments of the parties.

(d) *Attendance.* The applicant and any person who has requested an opportunity to be heard may attend the hearing, with or without counsel. The hearing shall be open to the public. In addition, the applicant and any other hearing participant may introduce oral testimony through such witnesses as the presiding officer shall permit.

(e) *Order of presentation.* (1) The applicant may present an opening statement of a length decided by the presiding officer. Then each of the hearing participants, or one among them selected with the approval of the presiding officer, may present an opening statement. The opening statement should summarize concisely what the applicant and each participant intends to show.